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ABSTRACT

Oral Roberts University opened in 1965 with an audiovisual Dial Access Information Retrieval System designed to provide basic course information to students. After the novelty and problems of the start, the system has progressed to the point where over half of the general education course work is now offered by the systems approach--creating a savings of 28.5 faculty. As part of the employment contract faculty members are urged to use a systems approach and are given released time to produce materials. The university, through its instructional materials center and other offices, helps with programs, materials, and copywriting. Ownership of material resides with the faculty member, but it is agreed that the university may use the material indefinitely without charge. If institutional support were lower, these arrangements could be patently unfair to the faculty. (WH)

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Ownership and Use of Instructional Materials Produced on the Oral Roberts University Campus

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The Ownership and Use of Instructional Materials Produced on the Oral Roberts University Campus

I. Introduction

The purpose of my presentation is chiefly to describe the ownership and use of instructional materials produced by faculty on the Oral Roberts University campus. I have selected a few bibliographical items which are listed in the distributed materials, but will confine the bulk of my remarks to our experience in this matter at ORU, since the history, the law, and thus the literature in this area are of fairly limited scope and certainly of limited quantity. It is my feeling that this approach will be the most beneficial in the time available.

Oral Roberts University opened in September of 1965 with a full complement of technology for a "systems" approach in teaching, particularly its courses in general education. This system was comprised chiefly of an audio-video Dial Access Information Retrieval System and a wide range of supporting facilities.

Initially, the institution was confronted with three concerns which were peculiar to its task of making effective use of the wide range of media facilities. First, the institution staffed and organized a division under a major University officer for the purpose of initiating, refining, and carrying out the task of incorporating the "educational systems" approach

into undergraduate education in a fashion which would ensure both economy and excellence. The considerable influence of this division on the total administrative structure may be perceived from the two organizational charts in the materials which you have been given. Let us review those briefly at this point. (Go over charts briefly at this point.)

Second, the institution, through the cooperative efforts of students/ faculty and technical staff, spent many months in its initial efforts of producing and refining its first courses to be offered primarily on the Dial Access Information Retrieval System. Since, in 1965, both the dial access technology and the educational software were relatively new, these initial production efforts were only one step above the prototype level. We were concerned about the operational "down time" of the equipment and also the "down time" of faculty who at the outset would certainly rather have "done it themselves." The brief history of the development of our systems approach in the materials which you have been given gives additional information on this point.

Finally, and specifically related to my subject for today, was the concern for faculty attitude toward and adaptation to the newer media which were available to them and the substantial role each participating faculty member must have in the preparation of materials and

presentations for use in the "systems" approach -- an approach which attempts to make basic course information available via a Dial Access System, leaving the instructor free to meet students in small groups and/or individually for the purpose of synthesis, interpretation, and elaboration.

II. The Policies and the Working Understanding Regarding the Ownership and Use of Instructional Material Produced on the ORU Campus

Because of the University's commitment in the form of equipment, staff, and facilities to carry out a mediated approach to instruction, the institution provides a number of incentives for wide faculty participation in the preparation of necessary instructional materials. To begin with, the academic departments carefully outline faculty responsibility for the preparation of appropriate media-compatible instructional materials as part of the interview and employment procedures carried out with prospective faculty. The employment contract also states that the faculty member "agrees to use a systems approach of media instruction" wherever appropriate for economy and effectiveness.

The University provides three faculty load hours of released time for each new faculty member during the first semester at the institution as part of a general orientation period which includes in-depth

training in the development of instructional materials for use in the Dial Access System. In addition, released time is given other faculty to develop new courses and for extensive revision of existing mediated courses.

Also, the institution provides all materials plus research and production services necessary for the production of instructional materials and software, both electronic and illustrative, audio and video. These materials and services are provided chiefly through the extensive technical production facilities and the Instructional Materials Center on the campus. A complete description of facilities is included in the materials which have been distributed.

Finally, the University offers assistance to faculty in copyrighting materials and programs both for in-house use and for any wider distribution, commercial or otherwise, which the faculty member may desire.

Thus, the University's commitment at all levels to the production of quality instructional materials and programs compatible with its curricula and its instructional media system is substantial. However, with over one-half of our general education course work now being offered by the systems approach and with the wide participation

and cooperation of the faculty in this effort, the returns have also been substantial for the students and for the institution. For example, during the 1973-74 academic year, the dial access system carried the equivalent teaching load of 28.54 faculty at cost saving of $132,241.

The policy and working understanding that have developed between the faculty and the administration of the University regarding the ownership and utilization of instructional material produced by the faculty are summed up in a statement which is part of the contract of employment signed by each member of the faculty and by the University. It reads as follows:

> Any material, whether copyrighted or not, prepared by he faculty member related to his services under this contract may be used either before or after the termination of his employment by or on behalf of Oral Roberts University without charge.

The ownership of instructional materials produced by the faculty has never been questioned--the materials belong to the faculty member who produced them. The production incentives and support services provided by the University plus the contractual arrangement make it seem to be equitable for the instructional materials produced to be made available for intramural use without charge. However, with a lower level of institutional support, such an arrangement could

be patently unfair to the faculty.

"Good law" has simply not yet emerged. However, thoughtful discussions in forums such as this convention provide valuable input. Failure to come to grips with the questions of ownership and equity of these instructional materials at a time when the mutual accountability relationships between faculty and administration and vice versa are a primary concern for everyone engaged in the higher educational enterprise will undoubtedly result in injustices for all involved.